



## **Arlington Transportation Advisory Committee**

Date: January 6, 2021.

To: Arlington Zoning Board of Appeal.

From: TAC Executive Committee.

Subject: Review of Thorndike Place Traffic Impact Assessment

### **Memorandum**

At the request of Jenny Raitt, Director of the Department of Planning and Community Development, the TAC Executive Committee has reviewed the Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) for the proposed Thorndike Place development, dated November 2020, the December 1, 2020 Beta review of that TIA, and other documents. The comments presented below have not been reviewed or approved by the full TAC membership.

1. The TAC Executive Committee concurs with the findings, comments, and recommendations of the Beta review except as noted below:
  - a. The proponent should consider providing subsidized MBTA passes in the proposed TDM program.
  - b. The project proposes an average of 1.3 parking spaces per unit which the Executive Committee believes is too high for a transit-oriented development (TOD). The Committee recommends the Board of Appeals reduce the required number of spaces as allowed by the Zoning Code. A maximum of one space per unit is more appropriate for a TOD. This would be consistent with the findings in the MAPC Perfect Fit Parking for metro Boston (Arlington was included in the report).
  - c. Vox on 2 is approximately 0.5 mile from the Alewife Station whereas the proposed development is 0.8 miles from the station. Should the vehicle mode share be increased to reflect that the proposed project is farther from the station than Vox on 2?
  - d. Add to Beta comment T20 that the dramatic level of service (LOS) improvements on Lake Street EB at Brooks Avenue do not seem correct. The TIA shows LOS improves from E to A in the AM and from D to A in the PM. Previous analyses of the then proposed Lake Street signals did not yield such dramatic improvements in LOS
  - e. Table 7 of the TIA should be expanded to include traffic volumes and percentage increases on Lake St. between Littlejohn Street and Route 2, and between Margaret Street and Brooks Ave.
  - f. The operations analysis should be expanded to include a discussion of queueing on Lake Street at the bikeway and at Brooks Avenue.
  - g. Consideration should be given to locating the proposed Bluebikes station farther to the west near the west end of the Thorndike Field parking lot.
  - h. In T15 include changes in student attendance at the Hardy School in the review of 2020 volumes.

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2. In addition to the requests and comments above, the Executive Committee believes the answers to the following Beta comments are critically important:
  - a. T32. Existing signed turning restrictions exist from 7-9 AM and from 4-7 PM on weekdays from Lake Street onto Wilson Avenue, Littlejohn Street, and Homestead Road (*Note: The Beta review incorrectly indicates there is also a turn restriction on Burch Street*). Assess the impact of this restriction and clarify whether discontinuance of this restriction is proposed.
  - b. T41. Quantify and analyze the effect of construction on the Dorothy Road neighborhood. It is expected that the earthwork required for the site will result in a significant number of trips for large dump trucks, in addition to other construction vehicles related to the grading and construction of the Site building. Verify turning path of large construction vehicles at affected intersections within the neighborhood and to/from Lake Street
  - c. T42. Provide additional commentary on the impact of the Project on the Dorothy Road neighborhood, including summarizing expected increases in daily and peak hourly traffic on Littlejohn Street, Dorothy Road, Burch Street and Margaret Street.

The Executive Committee believes the traffic impacts on Littlejohn Street, Dorothy Street and Burch Street may result in a significant percentage increase in neighborhood traffic volumes. This is a quality-of-life issue rather than a roadway capacity issue. The Executive Committee recommends a post-development monitoring study be included in the TDM program. The study may identify traffic calming measures which are needed to mitigate impacts on the neighborhood streets.

TAC Executive Committee:

Howard Muise, Chair.

Jeff Maxtutis, Vice Chair.

Shoji Takahashi, Secretary.

Dan Amstutz, Senior Transportation Planner, DPCD.